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Commission for Social Development
Forty-ninth session
9-18 February 2011
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: poverty eradication

Statement submitted by International Council on Social Welfare, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.5/2011/1.

10-66380 (E) 221210

Please recycle

Statement

The state of poverty

1. In 2005, the Commission for Social Development reviewed the progress of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty. In 2010, 15 years after the United Nations World Summit for Social Development, which resulted in the creation of the Decade, the Commission will discuss how the world has fared in achieving the goal of eradicating absolute poverty and reducing overall human poverty in all its forms and what more needs to be done.

2. According to reports, global poverty levels have changed very little over the past two decades. As the organization has repeated several times in recent years, the global gains have been due in large part to the successful reduction of income poverty in certain nations and regions, such as China, East Asia and, to some extent, India. These regions have given a positive spin to the overall global numbers.

3. However, viewed in terms of the many forms of human poverty outlined in the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 and the Millennium Summit in 2000, namely deprivation, malnutrition, inequalities, social exclusion and lack of participation, the situation today is worse despite the many achievements in income poverty alleviation in some regions.

4. Income poverty levels remain very high in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. However, three quarters of the 1.4 billion poor people living below the poverty line of $1.25 a day actually live in middle-income countries outside of Africa. In human poverty terms, the situation is deplorable not only in these poor or middle-income regions and countries but also in the richest areas of the world. The European Union and the United States of America are two of the richest areas in the world, but still between 13 to 17 per cent of their citizens have such limited resources that they cannot afford to pay for basic needs.

5. The international community is impeded in its efforts to eradicate poverty by financial, economic, human-made or natural crises, which seem to be characteristic of global development, make poverty worse for the poor, push others back into poverty and create millions of new poor in the process. The impact of the recent and ongoing food, energy and financial crises is especially discouraging. Poverty eradication efforts are falling behind under the weight of these multiple crises. Millions of jobs have been lost, as well as millions of dollars in individual savings and pensions. Consequently, many households now face a wide array of everyday basic concerns, ranging from the lack of adequate income with which to meet basic household consumption needs such as food and shelter, to the inability to pay for children's schooling.

6. In the face of crisis, it is crucial to formulate poverty eradication strategies that include protection measures that can maintain and consolidate the previous development gains and prevent the creation of a new generation of poor, while at the same time preventing those who have escaped poverty from being pushed back into it.

Policy recommendations

7. One lesson we have learned since the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 or the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty is that economic growth, jobs, improved trade and investments alone will not eradicate poverty.

8. Another lesson is that global development is characterized by one crisis after another, each one counteracting the partial gains made on poverty reduction and generating millions more new poor.

9. It is in this context that, in 2009, several United Nations bodies and agencies and international civil society organizations called for the creation of the United Nations Social Protection Floor Initiative as a key development instrument, core component and necessary starting point in the new push towards the eradication of poverty. At the United Nations Summit on the Millennium Development Goals, held in New York in September 2010, world leaders recognized that the implementation of social protection floors could contribute to the consolidation and achievement of development gains.

10. The Initiative is aimed at promoting access to essential services and social transfers for the poor and vulnerable, thus presenting a comprehensive approach to social protection that highlights both the supply and demand side of extending social protection and ensuring effective access.

11. The Social Protection Floor Initiative includes a basic set of essential social rights and transfers, in cash and in kind, to provide a minimum level of income and livelihood security for all and to facilitate effective demand for and access to essential goods and services. It also includes the supply of an essential level of goods and social services, such as health, water and sanitation, education, food, housing, and life- and asset-saving information that are accessible for all.

12. The Initiative emphasizes the need to guarantee services and transfers across the life cycle, from children, to the economically active with insufficient income, to older persons, paying particular attention to vulnerable groups by considering key characteristics that cut across all age groups, for example gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, disability, people living with HIV/AIDS, migrants, populations exposed and/or highly sensitive to adverse external effects such as natural hazards and extreme climate phenomena.

13. The Initiative is a social and economic necessity. Investing in the Initiative means investing in both social justice and economic development. Social protection contributes to economic growth by raising labour productivity and enhancing social stability and reducing poverty. In times of crisis, the Initiative acts as an automatic counter-cyclical stabilizer for the economy by alleviating the fall in aggregate demand.

14. Some 30 developing countries have already taken measures to introduce elements of a social protection floor. Their experiences have shown that social security schemes are a vital and flexible policy tool to counteract and soften the social and economic consequences of financial shocks and crises. They have demonstrated the feasibility of building social protection floors. With the necessary political will, adequate resources for capacity-building and a sound implementation

process, a strong national consensus for policies of the Initiative can be created and developed.

15. Ensuring a social protection floor for the entire world population represents a considerable challenge, but calculations by various United Nations agencies show that a basic floor of social transfers is globally affordable at virtually any stage of economic development. The objective should be to achieve a holistic approach to social protection that uses complementary instruments to cater to the particular needs of different groups in the formal economy, the informal economy and rural areas. Research shows that universal social protection systems are effective in reducing vulnerability and it is possible to implement such systems in most developing countries with a modest increase of budgetary resources.

16. A basic social security package for all is also technically feasible and fiscally affordable for developing economies and in many cases requires investment of about 4 per cent of gross domestic product. Once a social security protection system is in place, it is much easier to pursue enterprise-level flexibility and to cope with global economic downturns.

17. Basic social protection for all is essential at a time of regular global crisis, with increased economic insecurity and the accompanying trend towards informal and casual labour. For people living in poverty, the extension of some form of basic social protection will help prevent falling deeper into poverty. For those who are not poor, such protection will reduce their vulnerability to poverty.

18. Social protection is about prevention, support and promotion. It is not only about protection, but also about empowerment. It is not there to create dependency, but to unlock the productive capacity of women and men to participate in the economic, social and political lives, as workers, employers, consumers and citizens.

19. Social protection protects people from becoming trapped in poverty, and empowers them to seize market opportunities. It also helps to aggregate demand by increasing purchasing power and reducing precautionary savings.

20. Beyond the crisis, social protection has been seen by various analysts as a tool to rebalance the global economy.

21. The inclusion of people from developing countries in domestic goods and services markets will unlock their spending power and provide further dynamism to national and global economic growth.

22. Moving ahead is a matter of having the political will to set the vision, principles and ground rules for the societies that we want; to be prepared to overcome fiscal constraints; and to make hard decisions and push forward.

23. It is also a matter of finding resources to finance the implementation of the floor in a sustainable manner. International Labour Organization (ILO) Director-General Juan Somavia rightly said that the world did not lack the resources to eradicate poverty, it lacked the right priorities. The first step to increasing fiscal space relies on political will. Estimates of ILO have shown that a tax-financed social protection floor is an achievable medium-term objective, even in very low-income countries. Initially, some of the least developed countries will need international financial support to gradually introduce the schemes.

24. Moving ahead also demands major social dialogue to shape common objectives and strategies and make the necessary compromises. Empowering citizens and civil society organizations to take responsibility and initiatives in programmes to relieve poverty is essential. The progress in poverty eradication is due in no small measure to the partnerships forged between Governments and non-governmental organizations. An active civil society is a key component in any poverty reduction strategy, given the role that civil society has in keeping the state accountable, promoting necessary reforms and complementing state efforts to protect the most vulnerable.

25. Further, while adopted as a universal concept, the social protection floor should be nationally shaped within a framework of national-specific institutional structures, economic constraints, political dynamics and social aspirations. There is no one-size-fits-all solution.

26. Finally, as economies grow and financial and fiscal space widens, further increases in the level of protection should be envisaged. The floor cannot become a ceiling. But it should be understood as the first step towards higher levels of protection, as well as creating the conditions for successful insertion of the poor and disadvantaged in the labour market. This means that countries need to explore different forms of social protection. Clearly only a few developing countries will be able to offer extensive welfare provisions similar to those in developed countries. However, even poorer countries can experiment on a smaller scale with programmes that fit within their financial constraints and work alongside existing patterns of informal insurance. These include simplified social insurance schemes for the self-employed, support for informal insurance, formal title for informal assets and health insurance for the poor.

27. The strategy's principles of universality, solidarity, equitability, sustainability, promoting responsibility of individuals and concentrating supports to the poor converge with those guiding the implementation of the social protection floor worldwide.

28. The social floor approach could serve to build a common framework to enhance mutually reinforcing objectives in areas such as the labour market, social insurance, health, social assistance, poverty reduction and social service policies.

29. Although the prime responsibility for poverty eradication ultimately rests with the individual countries, poverty eradication is a shared responsibility because the roots of poverty are as much global as local. International partners can and must support and enhance individual countries' commitments to the above-mentioned pursuits. In this regard, international donors and institutions must continue to honour their commitments for development aid. Meanwhile, multilateral institutions such as the bodies and regional commissions of the United Nations; the World Bank and regional development banks, have to heed the criticisms of their poverty reduction operations, the resources they consume and the impact of their programmes on poverty. These institutions should remain at the front line of international development efforts, but their international, regional and bilateral assistance must be better coordinated, less competitive and more committed to narrowing the gap between words and institutional action.

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Statement submitted by the International Federation on Ageing, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.5/2011/1.

10-66386 (E) 281210

Please recycle

Statement

1. Poverty is more than a lack of financial resources. It is a serious threat to health, well-being and dignity. It isolates and marginalizes and is a challenge to human rights. For those living in poverty, it can present an impenetrable barrier to participating fully in society. Those who live in poverty struggle to preserve their dignity. They are often unrecognized and their voices remain unheard.

2. In 2001, the Council recognized that human suffering and defined poverty as a "sustained or chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights" (see E/C.12/2001/10, para. 8). The definition was echoed in article 5 of the Political Declaration adopted by the Governments attending the Second World Assembly on Ageing, held in Madrid in April 2002.

3. How do older people become impoverished? Some people are born into poverty and, because of lack of education or training opportunities, never emerge. Others become impoverished through a variety of factors. In developed countries, the loss of employment and health care can lead to poverty. In developing countries, where few programmes offering income security exist, the economic situation of older persons becomes exacerbated by weakened family support, particularly when it is undermined by disease, war and civil strife and emigration. Regrettably, there is no worldwide database on the number of older people living in poverty.

4. Despite the lack of data, it is known and accepted that poverty among older persons mainly affects women, minority groups and the disabled. It is also important to recognize that poverty among the elderly is a worldwide phenomenon, existing in industrialized as well as developing countries. For example, in New York City, more than one in five persons aged 60 and over lives in poverty. Such information is only available for a limited number of cities and nations. Therefore, in order to address the issue of poverty in general, it is critical that mechanisms be developed to obtain data that can be disaggregated by age and gender. The organization views that action as essential in order to measure the existence of poverty among subgroups within a country's population, including the elderly. Only with such data can good and appropriate policies and programmes be developed to benefit those in need.

5. There are many different policies and programmes that can begin to address the issue of poverty among the elderly. At the international level, policies and programmes directed at development and poverty eradication must acknowledge the substantial and growing population and diversity of older persons and, in so doing, ensure that the subpopulation does not go unnoticed, but rather benefits from these efforts. At the national level, the creation of income security programmes, if they do not exist, should be the goal. Where such programmes are not feasible, the equal access of older persons to employment and income-generating opportunities should be promoted. The particular needs of older women, the very oldest and those with disabilities and chronic conditions should be specifically addressed in poverty-eradication strategies and programmes.

6. In conclusion, if all older people, including those in poverty, are to participate fully in their societies, they must have a standard of living that empowers them. Achieving that goal requires political will on the part of Governments and awareness-building among all stakeholders, including both Governments and civil society.

7. A true partnership can be created to bring that goal to fruition in the foreseeable future.

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Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: poverty eradication

Statement submitted by Pax Romana, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.5/2011/1.

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Please recycle

Statement

Introduction

1. The global economic and financial crisis has made an impact and continues to make an impact on the lives of people around the world. It has been a major setback to efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the World Programme of Action for Youth. The crisis has caused more people than ever to be living in poverty. The crisis has also proven that youth are a very vulnerable group. Now more than ever the world needs strong coordination of efforts and goodwill, the empowerment of civil society organizations and global solidarity. With regard to youth and the eradication of poverty, Pax Romana finds that the pressing issues are education, employment and participation.

Education

2. The crisis has created a situation where there is an increase in those seeking admission to institutions of higher learning. Some universities have been spared by public budgeting that was already secured prior to the crisis. However, in the upcoming set of budget cycles, we can predict that funding will be reduced even though there is an increase in demand. For those who live in countries where higher education is either partially or entirely subsidized by the State, Governments and institutions will be faced with several choices: limit the number of people gaining admission; allow for an increase in the number of people gaining admission while reducing subsidies to students; or provide a lower-quality education to the same number of students.

3. Reducing subsidies to students in higher education is a risky move because it directly affects the future and development of a country. A reduction in subsidies and increasing enrolment will likely place the burden on individual students. Maintaining allocations to universities at the present level is likely to push institutions further into commercial activities to cover budget shortfalls, such as an increase in fees. This situation gives a disproportionate advantage and easier access to education to wealthier students. Students who are economically challenged are automatically disadvantaged, which defeats the efforts made to achieve the Education for All goals.

4. The process of eradicating poverty is in dire need of highly qualified human capital to drive a country's economic and social development. An investment in education for only a few is a recipe for development that does not respect the dignity and potential of all people. Education should not be reserved only for those who have deep pockets. An investment in education for all is an investment in eradicating poverty.

Youth unemployment

5. According to *Global Employment Trends for Youth*, published by the International Labour Organization in 2010, youth unemployment rates are more sensitive to the crisis than the rates of adults. The rate of youth unemployment

increased from 11.9 per cent in 2007 to 13.0 per cent in 2009. Over 81 million young people are without jobs and are unable to earn a decent living.

6. Youth non-governmental organizations understand well that young people are essential to economic development. For this reason youth-led organizations such as Pax Romana focus on the development of the person as a means of eradicating poverty.

7. A person who actively participates in society from an early age has what is necessary to eradicate poverty. Young people who are active in youth clubs and associations and in community-based and faith-based organizations develop a set of transferable skills which are needed for decent employment. Projects which focus on the development of the young person help to empower youth with transferable skills. These sets of skills are acquired during activities in life such as participation in youth clubs and associations and in community-based and faith-based organizations, to name a few.

8. With projects that engage young people, Pax Romana assists in the formation of broad skill areas such as communications, research and planning, human relations, organization and management, and leadership. Skills in these areas enable young people to gain employment and earn a decent wage.

9. Owing to the economic crisis, Governments and other sources of funding have disinvested in youth and youth organizations. Actions such as these are detrimental to eradicating poverty. This trend needs to be reversed.

Youth participation

10. When given the opportunity to play an enhanced role in governance and other social sectors, youth can help to alleviate pressing social problems like unemployment and crime. When youth are allowed to blossom into full members of society at an early age, they learn to value their place in their individual communities and work to make improvements in any way they can. By allowing young people to take a more active role in the decision-making processes vital to society, youth can play a much more valuable role at all levels of governance and society.

11. Young people must be pulled from the margins and placed in a more central position in society. If the Government begins to value youth, other sectors of society will soon follow suit. Once the State recognizes the great value of young people, then business leaders, civil society leaders, entrepreneurs and many other social actors will utilize youth for constructive projects that bring about social and economic growth.

12. In order to achieve youth participation, negative stereotypes surrounding youth must be battled. Adults have forgotten about the value of youth to society. As the Youth Employment Network wrote in its report *Joining Forces with Young People: A Practical Guide to Collaboration for Youth Employment*: "Rather than being viewed as a problem or risk to be contained or solved, youth should be recognised as social actors with skills and capacities to bring about constructive solutions to societal issues that directly affect them. Policy makers should not only invite young people into policy discussions but also listen and act upon their advice."[1]

[1] Available from www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/yen/downloads/yen_youth_guide_en.pdf.

13. The Secretary-General of the United Nations said that youth should be given a chance to take an active part in the decision-making of local, national and global levels. It is especially important that young people be given the opportunity to play a role in politics and policymaking at all levels.

Recommendations

14. In conclusion, Pax Romana makes the recommendations set out below.

15. The focus to educate must not fall victim to the economic and financial crisis. Instead of cutting budgets and spending on education, this is the opportune moment to invest more in education. Long-term vision rather than immediate results will help to eradicate poverty. Every effort should be made to prevent the marginalization of the poor with respect to access to and success in higher education.

16. A small percentage of national defence budgets should be used to fund youth development projects. All over the world, Governments have allowed military spending to grow at the expense of necessary social development. If Member States dedicate even 1 per cent of current military spending to fund youth grass-roots initiatives, greater economic and social development can be achieved. Young people in every country have the capacity to bring positive change to their communities and the world. With a little bit of financial assistance from their Governments, youth everywhere can be given the opportunity to do truly wonderful work.

17. Countries should ensure that young people have a voice in national debates, especially in the development of and decision-making on domestic policies. Participating in this process allows young people to take ownership of their future. The establishment of national youth councils and the assurance of their governance independent from the Government would ensure that the voice of even the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups are expressed.

18. States should mobilize the necessary resources to ensure that youth delegates are able to participate in the activities of the United Nations and its agencies. By participating at the United Nations youth leaders can rally support for activities that promote the goals of the International Year of Youth, which calls for dialogue and mutual understanding.

19. The technical skills of young people should be harnessed and opportunities for them expanded in emerging fields like clean energy and sustainable development. Their knowledge can help achieve advances in cutting-edge industries that can improve the economy, provide countless jobs and protect the environment from the destructive powers of unfettered human development.

20. Social cohesion should be encouraged and youth used as the vehicle to promote social stability and peace. This is especially critical in pluralistic societies. Once again, the purpose of the International Year of Youth is to promote dialogue and mutual understanding. Youth can be at the forefront of any efforts to alleviate civil strife. Young people already have a great deal of experience in countries throughout the world in working with those who are different from them. As a result, youth have the capacity to bring the many groups that may exist in a single society together for the sake of greater economic and social development.

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Statement submitted by the Sisters of Charity Federation, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and VIVAT International, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Please recycle

Statement

Poverty and climate change

1. Adopted by the delegates to the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995), the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development proposes a new and strengthened approach to social development and gives high priority to promoting social justice and universal respect for human rights, to ensuring a society of non-violence and to protecting the integrity and sustainable use of the environment.

2. The consequences of climate change, which directly or indirectly render persons living in poverty even more vulnerable and less resilient to the social, economic and environmental stresses in their societies, are in direct opposition to their aspirations, undermining attempts to promote social development, violating human rights and destabilizing societies through violent civil conflict. Plans to mitigate climate change and adapt to its consequences must, therefore, be incorporated into any attempt to eradicate poverty.

Climate change and social development

3. According to the *Human Development Report 2007/2008: Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World*, climate change is the defining human development issue of our generation, a cross-cutting issue with the potential to obstruct efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

4. *Goal 1 aims to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.* However, climate change is expected to change the path and rate of economic growth, thus increasing poverty through reduced income opportunities, and projected to alter regional food security, especially in Africa where food security is expected to worsen.

5. *Goal 2 aims to achieve universal primary education.* However, because of climate change, loss of livelihood assets, natural disasters and displacement reduce educational opportunities.

6. *Goals 4, 5, 6 are health-related, aiming to combat major diseases, reduce infant mortality and improve maternal health.* However, climate change increases heat-related mortality and illness and the prevalence of vector-borne diseases, which especially affect pregnant women and children.

7. By hampering efforts to deliver on the promise of the Millennium Development Goals, climate change undermines attempts to eradicate poverty and to achieve equity and equal opportunity for all. It leads to a future in which progress in social development built up over generations will be reversed and the poorest 40 per cent of the world's citizens consigned to even greater poverty and diminished opportunity.

Climate change and human rights

8. In 2008, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted a resolution 7/23 on human rights and climate change, in which the Council recognized that climate change posed an immediate and far-reaching threat to people and communities around the world. Indeed, it is set to undermine basic human rights on a massive

scale, with the rights of people living in poverty particularly at risk,[1] for example, their right to life, liberty and security (article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights); right to an adequate standard of living, including clothing, medical care and necessary social service (article 25); right to participate in government, public services and cultural life (articles 21 and 27); and right to work and education (articles 23 and 26).

9. Thus, climate change is in direct opposition to the Copenhagen framework for action which maintains that the promotion of universal respect for all human rights is integral to the eradication of poverty.

Climate change and social stability

10. By creating conditions that lead to social destabilization and obstructing the implementation of policies that promote poverty eradication, violent civil conflict further exacerbates the marginalization and vulnerability of people living in poverty.

11. While it is recognized that violent conflicts may be due to a variety of socio-economic factors and that climate change is not the sole cause, it nevertheless does serve as a trigger in the face of scarce resources such as water or arable land. It may also ignite conflict where competition for resources between locals and populations resettled owing to climate-induced migration worsens pre-existing ethnic or social tensions.[2]

12. Besides destabilizing social institutions, civil conflict further degrades Earth's life support systems — the atmosphere, land and oceans — thereby exacerbating the consequences of climate change and adding to the threats to human security and obstructing the commitment agreed to in Copenhagen ensuring non-violence within and among societies and to protecting the integrity of the environment.

Critical elements of good practice

13. This severe and disproportionate threat to human and ecological security requires that efforts to mitigate climate change and adapt to its consequences be

[1] "Oxfam International, Climate wrongs and human rights: putting people at the heart of climate-change policy". Oxfam, Briefing Paper 117, 2008. Available from www.oxfam.org/en/policy/bp117-climate-wrongs-and-human-rights.

[2] Jennifer Wallace, "The security dimension of climate change", in The Worldwatch Institute, *State of the World 2009: into a Warming World* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009), pp. 63-66.

incorporated into effective plans to eradicate poverty. The submitting organizations recommend that these be based on the following critical elements of good practice:[3]

- Community-based assessment, planning, execution and evaluation
- Participation by those most directly affected by the programme
- Creativity in problem solving
- Utilization of skills and knowledge of both women and men
- Multiplicity of benefits to impact the whole community
- Preservation and protection of ecological integrity
- Replicability of design and implementation
- Sustainability of the programme

A moral imperative

14. Climate change affects everyone, but there are three constituencies with no political voice especially threatened by climate change, making action to cope with it a moral imperative:

Persons who are living in poverty. This marginalized and excluded group, 70 per cent of whom are women, are on the front lines of climate change, whether in the Sudan, Bangladesh, the Maldives, the United States of America (e.g., New Orleans, Louisiana), or Australia. They bear the brunt of its manifestations, for which they are not mainly responsible.

Persons displaced by climate change. Sometimes referred to as "climate refugees" because their displacement is neither free nor spontaneous, these persons are forced to migrate within countries and across borders by human-induced climate change and the socio-economic conditions that either contribute to it or come in its wake. Thus, they are rendered homeless and, for an increasing number, stateless, without civil protection and the resources to provide for their basic human needs.

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[3] The listed elements of good practice are based on a field survey of social integration/inclusion in grass-roots communities and a synthesis of research on best practices utilized by women coping with climate change. The survey on social integration was conducted by the NGO Committee on Social Development with the support of the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service, and a report by the Committee, *Social Integration in Action: Stories from the Grassroots*, which includes examples of these best practices and can be accessed from http://ngosocdev.wordpress.com/category/survey-on-social-integration. A report on the research on best practices utilized by women coping with climate change, conducted by members of the NGO Committee Subcommittee on Women and Climate Change, is included with the information sheets found on the Women and Climate Change webpage of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women, New York (www.ngocsw.org). The following websites also contain documents which outline good practices that illustrate these elements: www.dainet.org/sdnp/success.htm; www.ausaid.gov.au/closeup/gender_adaptation.cfm; and http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=46131.

Note: statement also endorsed and supported by the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council: Company of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul; Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd; Congregations of St Joseph; International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary; Passionists International; UNANIMA International.

Future generations. While persons living in poverty suffer most severely the consequences of climate change today, in the future no one will escape. As noted in the Copenhagen Declaration, our responsibility extends beyond the present to future generations; equity among generations must be ensured.

15. In sum, taking climate change into account in efforts to promote a society that is poverty free is a matter of justice and equity. As noted in article 3 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, "The Parties should protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind, on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities."

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Statement submitted by World Youth Alliance, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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Statement*

1. Poverty eradication takes place at an individual level, by educating and investing in persons, and enabling their creativity and natural capacities to develop and flourish. It requires whole communities to work together for the common good. Poverty eradication requires strong families who take seriously their duties and responsibilities in caring for their members and building intergenerational solidarity. On another level, the State is responsible for good governance, curtailing corruption and ensuring that conditions exist for human beings to bring themselves out of poverty and flourish in accordance with their intrinsic dignity.

2. The World Youth Alliance, a global coalition of young people promoting the dignity of the human person in policy and culture, welcomes the opportunity to review the current year's priority theme for the Commission for Social Development: poverty eradication. In preparation for the 20th anniversary of the International Year of the Family, the statement will focus on the importance of the family in helping to eradicate poverty for young people, older persons, and persons with disabilities.

The family

3. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes that the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society. Since it was adopted, the United Nations community has struggled with the meaning and implications of such recognition. What is a fundamental group unit? Should support and protection be given on the political level or the community level? These questions have to be answered in order to understand how support for families helps to eradicate poverty.

4. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society because it is the place where children first experience what it means to be loved and recognized unconditionally. This does not mean that children always experience unconditional love in the family, but we recognize this as the purpose and function of the family. The family is "natural" because it is prior to the State, and not created by the State. The goal of the State is to recognize families as the fundamental units that enable social function and development. The family is therefore both prior to, and necessary for, the development of free, healthy and flourishing societies. Support for the family, because of its importance with regard to social functioning, as well as the care and well-being of children, the aged and the most vulnerable, should be provided on the political and the cultural level.

Youth

5. The launch of the International Year of Youth on 12 August 2010 marked the beginning of a year's worth of activities aimed at encouraging youth participation and dialogue and mutual understanding. During the year, young people will join together and commit themselves to dialogue on issues affecting them.

6. The family is of primary importance to young people, because it influences all the issues that youth are currently facing, including unemployment and the effects of climate change. The encouragement and love a youth experiences in family life is directly related to how well he or she does in school and consequently impacts the

* Issued without formal editing.

chances of getting a job. Therefore, support for the family is essential to recognizing and promoting the rights of young people, especially as they relate to poverty eradication.

Persons with disabilities

7. It is important to promote the equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms for disabled persons, which among other things, shows our respect for the diversity of the human condition. Persons with disabilities are consistently and continually examples of the values of self-improvement and personal development. Their unique contribution to society encourages us to fulfil our duty to aid and protect them.

8. There are approximately 650 million persons with disabilities in the world and 80 per cent of them live in developing countries, many in conditions of poverty. The isolation of people with disabilities is caused by stigma, discrimination, myths, misconceptions, and ignorance. These problems have a two-way relationship: disability increases the risk of poverty, and conditions of poverty increase the risks of disability. Poor people are more likely to have a disability because of the conditions in which they live. Disability is likely to make people poorer because of limited opportunities and discrimination. Too often, Governments and communities fail to provide special health care and education needed for the integral development of persons with disabilities, which generates cycles of poverty through generations.

9. Both in developed and developing countries, individuals are targeted for termination based solely on their disability; genetic diagnosis and prenatal screening technologies are often used to identify persons with disabilities prior to birth. This practice ignores the intrinsic dignity of the human person and is a clear violation of human rights. Member States in both developed and developing countries should adopt measures so as to avoid these violations which encourage poverty and underdevelopment.

10. There is an urgent need to close the gap between policy and practice by mainstreaming the perspective of persons with disabilities in realizing the Millennium Development Goals. The MDGs are intertwined and thus if one is altered the others are affected. Therefore, the role of States, civil society and the private sector in mainstreaming disability must be defined, but not without defining the role of the family beforehand. The family is the primary place where persons with disabilities can be cared for and learn how to care. It is within this institution that the weakest and most vulnerable members of our society are defended and protected.

Older persons

11. Older persons are those persons ages 60 or 65 and older, roughly equivalent to retirement ages in most developed countries, although the definition changes from country to county and over time. In the past few decades, issues related to ageing populations have risen to the forefront of the development agenda. It is witnessed that recently, there has been an increasing number of persons surviving into the advanced stages of life.

12. Legalization of euthanasia has followed from the debate on issues of an ageing population. Under the framework "dying with dignity", in some countries suicide is

assisted for people suffering chronic physical and mental pain. It is acknowledged that in various cases assisted suicide was carried out for people who appeared to be lucid.[1] Nevertheless, respect and care for the elderly, which has been one of the few constants in human culture everywhere, reflects a basic interplay between self-preserving and society-preserving impulses which has ensured the survival and progress of the human race. Assisted suicide will lead, over time, to a decrease in political will to provide palliative care and health-care services by decreasing the demand for them. Pressuring the terminally ill to take their own lives when they believe they have become a burden violates human dignity.

13. Only through solidarity can humankind undertake the challenge of an ageing population. Since the family is the school of solidarity, it is necessary to enable the family as a whole, including its male members, to participate in and share the burden of caregiving. Elders fulfil the role of educating and passing on values to the younger generation; this role has ensured man's survival and progress and promoted a culture in which intergenerational solidarity fosters the common good, especially the realization of responsibilities towards future generations.

14. Worldwide, the overall responsibility of the family to provide the traditional care and support needs of the ageing is diminishing. Therefore, there is an evident need to educate the general public, and in particular families, with regard to the ageing process. It is important that the ageing have access to basic literacy and self-maintenance education, as well as solidarity education, starting at an early age so that ageing is understood as a natural process.

Conclusion

15. Poverty eradication requires recognizing the role that families play in the lives of all persons, including young people, persons with disabilities and older persons. Social development, and therefore economic development, cannot occur without this fundamental recognition by the State and society, and a corresponding support structure for the family.

[1] In his congressional testimony to the United States Congress in 1996, Herbert Hending, M.D., stated that for a substantial number of people in the Netherlands, physicians had ended their patients' lives without consultation with the patients.

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Submitted by International Association of Schools of Social Work, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.5/2011/1.

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Please recycle

Statement*

Girls rights to education

1. Worldwide, 54 per cent of the 72 million children out of school are girls, proving the barriers of poverty prevent girls from consistently completing primary and secondary education. This statement is to encourage universal integration of the stipend programme to increase girls' participation and attendance in academia. By providing the family economic support to alleviate aspects of poverty that are directly correlated to girls' enrolment, there is potential for increased and elongated attendance. The net gains include, but are not limited to: increased attendance rates, increases in literacy and livelihood, elder age for marrying and maternity and decreases in infant mortality, HIV/AIDS, and generational poverty.

Poverty prohibits education

2. While education is a right, it is not addressed under any universal mandate. Several cultural practices remove girls from academia to work or to marry prior to completing secondary education because they have not shown potential to their guardians. Gender parity in the classroom would cut the number of girls out of school by over 6 million. In sub-Saharan Africa, almost 12 million girls do not have access to enrol in school, similar to Yemen, where nearly 80 per cent of girls are unlikely to enrol, compared with 36 per cent of boys. Turkey faces cultural barriers in addition to poverty that prevents 43 per cent of Kurdish-speaking girls from receiving more than two years of education. Likewise, 97 per cent of Hausa-speaking Nigerian girls from impoverished homes have less than two years' education.

3. Investing in girls is not frivolous as it is proven that educated women are more influential to the global community. Illiteracy is directly correlated to unemployment; two thirds of the 759 million adults that are illiterate are women. In 2000, 87 per cent of Afghani women were illiterate. In Chad, Ethiopia and Mali, women are 1.5 times more likely to be illiterate. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, unemployment rates among women aged 20 to 24 are twice the level of men in the same age group. Millions of women are not living to their fullest potential and cannot contribute their optimum amount to their community. Learning needs to start with children to improve the lives of adults, and it is our responsibility to provide the tools for success. Over 20 countries have implemented variations of a stipend programme. Best practices include:

- **Brazil** (*Bolsa Familia*). Established federally in 2003, financial aid is provided to families in poverty with children of age to attend primary or secondary education on the condition children have consistent attendance and are up to date on vaccines. Families earning less than 140 reais ($73) a month receive 22 reais ($12) per child. Families whose income is less than 70 reais receive 68 reais per month. Poverty has decreased 27.7 per cent since the programme's inception, benefiting more than 12 million families.[1]

* Issued without formal editing.

[1] G. Duffy "Family friendly: Brazil's scheme to tackle poverty", 25 May 2010, *BBC News*.

- **Mexico** (*Oportunidades*). Originally founded in 1997, the current programme was enforced in 2002 to provide a direct cash transfer directly to the matriarch with school aged children with consistent attendance to be used to supplement the cost of vaccines, and dietary needs. By 2006, the programme was responsible for aiding one quarter of Mexico's population.

- **Bangladesh**. Established in 1993, the Food for Education Program targeted the enrolment rate and consistent attendance by providing landless and very poor with a monthly allocation of wheat or rice. The primary education stipend programme introduced bank-mediated disbursement allocated to over 5.5 million students in the amount of 100 taka ($1.76) per month per pupil and 125 taka per month for more than one pupil.[2]

United Nations and the international position

4. Affirmation of the efforts is made by both international and local agencies. The World Bank is established as a supporter of the programme.[3] Over 20 countries have established a form of the stipend programme, whether by support of the government or non-governmental organizations and grass-roots agencies that are leading the way. The United Nations and participating State parties have nearly reached consensus to protect and work towards universal education as explicitly stated under article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, paragraph 1, section (a): "Make primary education compulsory and available free to all." It is a priority for the United Nation to promote this programme since addressing a girl's right to primary and secondary education is directly correlated to all eight Millennium Development Goals.

Role in girl's futures

5. Implementing the stipend programme broadens access to education, which will create a greater pool of competent and effective leaders in society. The positive correlation between school attendance and employment implies that education should be geared towards equipping student with skills necessary for full development of personal potential. Decent work and supportive income are the best means for enabling families to move out of poverty. Girls are young women who will grow up to be mothers of children, and head corporations and countries; there is no profession left unturned by women. It is our right as adults, caretakers, educators, government officials, presidents, and friends to help girls develop to their full potential. Girls who are not counted, do not count; it is our duty to account for every girl. We urge a review of best practices and reports on the stipend programme. In doing so, we recommend:

- Providing a regular stipend, given directly to the matriarch of the family every month that her daughter(s) has perfect attendance — excluding natural disaster, illness, or emergency

- Maintaining a multidimensional approach to addressing poverty by also requiring children to be up-to-date on vaccines and receiving appropriate nutrition

[2] See http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099080014368/BangladeshStipend.pdf.

[3] See http://www.h.chiba-u.ac.jp/mkt/revised%20fssap%20paper9b.pdf.

- Ensuring that marginalized and excluded groups be a priority concern of government policy by recognizing the impact of social policy on those living in poverty
- Assessing and allocating an appropriate budget based on analysis of poverty specific to communities
- Being conscious of what it would realistically take to lift one family from poverty
- Looking at the value of education and compare it to the harmful effects of poverty and assess what can realistically be done to eradicate hardships and create success for young girls

Note: Statement also endorsed by Company of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council.

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Please recycle

Statement*

Poverty eradication through debt relief

1. In September 2010, Heads of State and Government from 140 countries met at the United Nations in New York to reaffirm their commitment to keeping the promise of reaching the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, declaring that "poverty eradication is essential", even in the midst of the global economic downturn.

2. With just five years left to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and seven years left in the Second Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, there is a new urgency to increase resources for social services in the poorer nations.

3. As a result of the global financial, fuel and food crises the least developed countries have seen contractions in economic growth, export earnings, remittances, and foreign investment. The total external debt for African countries, 33 of which are least developed countries, increased from 22.4 per cent of GDP in 2008 to 25.4 per cent in 2009. External debt as a percentage of exports of goods and services rose from 53.4 per cent in 2008 to 80.3 per cent in 2009. Ten least developed countries are currently in debt distress and 11 more are at high risk of debt distress (see A/65/155). Oxfam International estimates that the financial crisis has created a $65 billion budget loss for low-income countries.[1]

4. The World Bank predicted that the financing gap of developing countries is projected to be $219 billion in 2010. If bilateral aid flows decline, as they have in the past, this could affect long-term growth rates in developing countries, potentially increasing the number of people living in extreme poverty by as much as 26 million.[2]

Debt relief strategies

5. Both short-term strategies for crisis mitigation and long-lasting reforms of global financial/economic architecture have been proposed by various non-governmental organizations as well as Member States as effective ways of addressing the debt problem. Debt cancellation, debt moratorium, debt standstills and grants instead of loans are some of the short-term mechanisms proposed.

Effective debt relief and restructuring measures

The London Debt Agreement of 1953

6. The London Agreement relieved Germany of external debts to the sum of nearly 30 billion marks consisting of pre- and post-war debts. Its preamble states that the treaty was based on the intention of removing obstacles on the way towards the re-establishment of normal economic relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the other states and thereby to make a contribution to the development of a flourishing international community.

* Issued without formal editing.

[1] Katerina Kyrili and Matthew Martin, *Impact of the Global Economic Crisis on the Budgets of Low-Income Countries* (Oxfam International, July 2010).

[2] See www.worldbank.org/global outlook.

7. The London Debt Agreement is still one of the few historical examples of how circumspect and long-lasting debt management can be — if the political will is there. Its unusually humane conditions for the highly indebted post-war Germany made a significant contribution to the German economic miracle of the 1950s and 1960s and to a speedy reconstruction of the devastated country. This example demonstrates the value and long-lasting effects of debt management when there exists the political will for a serious solution to a debt crisis and the debt problem is not considered in isolation from the international political and financial context.

Debt2Health

8. An example of a forward-looking strategy to relieve the burden of debt is the Debt2Health mechanism. In this approach, the creditor country agrees to relinquish a part of its loans on condition that the beneficiary country spends the funds on its people via programmes previously approved by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

9. For instance, Germany and Indonesia have signed an agreement whereby Germany has provided 50 million euros to the Global Fund to be spent on investments in HIV/AIDS services and public health interventions. A similar agreement has been signed between Australia and Indonesia to deal with the prevention and treatment of tuberculosis.[3]

10. Debt cancellation has achieved significant results such as doubling school enrolment in Uganda, vaccinating 500,000 children in Mozambique, adding three more years of schooling for Honduran children and returning 1.5 million children to school in the United Republic of Tanzania.

Debt work-out mechanisms

11. Debt work-out mechanisms are proposed as means to address the structural changes that are needed to solve the debt crisis faced by severely indebted countries, whether low-income countries, middle-income countries or European Union countries like Greece and Ireland.

12. Two suggested reforms of the financial architecture, as means of managing debt over the long term, call for a sovereign debt work-out mechanism and AFRODAD's fair and transparent arbitration mechanism that provides a comprehensive and fair structure for debt relief and restructuring.

13. Sovereign debt work-out mechanisms which would create a legal and policy framework that places the burden of irresponsible lending and borrowing on both creditors and debtors would be able to address cross-border resolutions and the severe debt burdens of developing countries as well as the question of odious and illegitimate debt through debt cancellation, moratoriums, and standstills.

14. Debt tribunals such as a fair and transparent arbitration mechanism have been recommended specifically to address illegitimate and odious debts. They are particularly attractive when considered as empowerment tools for highly indebted countries because of the flexibility independent arbitrators have in fashioning unique settlements on a case-by-case basis. It is also recommended that these fair

[3] See http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/documents/InnovativeFinForDev.pdf.

and transparent arbitration mechanisms be international and under the auspices of the United Nations to give them legitimacy.

15. The world's 79 poorest countries have received nearly $21 billion during the recent crises, mostly in the form of loans. More debt service obligations will only continue to keep generations of the most vulnerable buried in external debt and unrelenting poverty.

16. We urge Governments to take responsibility for assisting heavily indebted countries in whatever way possible to alleviate the persistent presence of extreme poverty.

17. We also urge Governments to support and approve a sovereign debt mechanism under the auspices of the United Nations.

Note: Statement also endorsed by the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council: Dominican Leadership Conference, Salesian Missions, Sisters of Charity Federation, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, VIVAT International and UNANIMA International.

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Statement submitted by the Dominican Leadership Conference and the Partnership for Global Justice, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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Please recycle

Statement

1. On 18 October 2010 the United Nations commemorated the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty using the theme "From poverty to decent work: bridging the gap". Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message called for special attention to be paid to the employment status of young people, saying that a decent job was key to eradicating poverty. Securing decent jobs requires some level of training and education.

Quality instruction

2. The purpose of this statement is to point out the essential relationship between quality training/education/learning and the quality of instruction given by well-trained teachers. The evidence of their direct interdependence is well documented in extensive educational literature. In countries keen to implement the Millennium Development Goals, unfortunately, many are hiring unqualified teachers who are paid less and offered fewer (if any) benefits than regular teachers. The United Nations estimates that double the current number of qualified teachers would be needed in sub-Saharan Africa in order to meet the primary education target by 2015.

Challenges

3. One of the reasons for the practice of settling for unqualified candidates is often pressure by the World Bank and/or International Monetary Fund to cut education budgets in these countries. Additionally, finance ministries and even some aid donors encourage more contract employment of teachers at lower levels of pay and benefits than teachers under standard civil service regulations in order to reduce national budget pressures.

4. In addition to unqualified teachers there are also in many cases an insufficient number of teachers, resulting in unacceptable student-teacher ratios. This is particularly true at the pre-primary and primary levels. For example, in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), India, Liberia, Nepal, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania the pre-primary pupil/teacher ratio was 40:1 or higher in 2007. In certain countries whose overall statistics already appear dismal, marginalized regions face particular disadvantages. In Kenya, the national ratio of pupils to pre-primary teachers is 54:1. However in the district of Turkana, one of Kenya's poorest, the ratio is 123:1. In Indonesia the percentage of pre-primary teachers holding at least one diploma ranges from 60 per cent in Banten, a relatively prosperous area, to only 1 per cent in Maluku, a region with high levels of poverty.

Need for teacher training

5. At the primary level many countries in sub-Saharan Africa have more than doubled the teacher workforce, thereby improving the pupil/teacher ratio. But in order to accelerate progress towards universal primary education most countries also will need to accelerate a concerted drive to recruit and train teachers. Despite the progress reported from 2000 to 2010, trained teacher shortages remain a serious concern. In a number of countries the percentage of trained teachers in the

workforce has actually declined since 1999. In Togo it has fallen from 31 per cent to 15 per cent as recruitment has shifted to contract teachers.[1]

6. For all of the above reasons, reports that more children are enrolled in primary education can be deceiving. Overcrowded classrooms rarely if ever result in the kind of quality education envisioned by Millennium Development Goal 2. And underqualified teachers will ensure that a country fails the quality test.

7. Decent jobs in the twenty-first century will increasingly require some degree of proficiency in mathematics, science and technology. This has implications for the content of educational programmes. Quality teacher training in specialized subjects must be the focus of education planning in every country striving to meet the Millennium Development Goals over the next five years. Owing to the rise of knowledge-based economies, persistent youth unemployment for lack of appropriate knowledge and skills and the general marginalization of young people lacking skills, Governments must review and revalue technical and vocational education.

8. In general, factors that will contribute to assuring quality teachers, and therefore quality learning, are programmes that provide ongoing professional teacher education, grounding in local cultural reality and mentoring by master experienced teachers.

9. Both initial training and professional development are essential to creating an adequate cadre of effective teachers. Teachers need to understand the content of the curriculum in depth; to learn methods that will enable them to teach students of varying abilities; to work within education systems where role models — even a small number — are in evidence; and to be creative in delivering educational content and skills that are appropriate to the cultural reality of their students. Unless the quality of education is adequate, inevitable high dropout and repetition rates work against realizing the goal of universal primary education.

Examples of effective practices

10. There are many examples of initiatives that recognize the relationship between quality learning and quality teaching. For example, the Republic of Korea's UNESCO-supported Learning to Live Together project focuses on teacher training in the Asia-Pacific area for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The objective is to nurture pedagogical practices and learning materials that foster tolerance, social cohesion and intercultural understanding, facilitating peace, non-discrimination and dialogue among peoples. Fittingly, it recognizes that to accomplish any educational Millennium Development Goal, effective teacher training is unavoidable.

11. In Peru, a non-governmental organization has been working closely with teachers to offset a 40 per cent withdrawal rate among the children in primary school and a 60 per cent rate in high school. With the help of the teachers, it was possible to set up four libraries around the barrios, purchase school books, hire tutors, provide classes for parents and start a reading programme for children and

[1] *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010: Reaching the Marginalized* (Paris, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 115.

adults. The local libraries have become resource centres for the children, and the school dropout rate has been reduced to 5 per cent in the primary school and 8 per cent in high school.[2] Other examples abound of the universally recognized relationship between quality learning and quality teaching.

Recommendations

12. Ensuring that all children have access to quality education is essential to guaranteeing full employment and decent work, as well as to breaking the cycle of poverty. But quality education depends on quality teaching. Quality teaching is impossible without an adequate supply of trained professional educators available in every classroom of every country.

13. The submitting organizations encourage Governments to recommit themselves to the principles of quality education spelled out in commitment 6 (b) of the Copenhagen Declaration adopted at the World Summit for Social Development in 1995:

> "Emphasize lifelong learning by seeking to improve the quality of education to ensure that people of all ages are provided with useful knowledge, reasoning ability, skills, and the ethical and social values required to develop their full capacities in health and dignity and to participate fully in the social, economic and political process of development ..."

14. The submitting organizations offer the following recommendations:

- Review existing educational training programmes for teachers to guarantee they are rooted in local cultural reality
- Develop an annual report on the number of qualified teachers currently employed in primary and pre-primary levels, as well as the number in training for classroom employment within the subsequent two years
- Identify and make use of master/experienced teachers to assist in teacher training programmes

15. In keeping with the spirit of the Millennium Development Goals, it is the belief of the submitting organizations that quality education at all levels is a strong driving force for the eradication of poverty and that professionally trained teachers are critical to this initiative.

[2] "Social Integration in Action: Stories from the Grassroots", NGO Committee for Social Development, 2009, p. 16. Available from www.un-ngls.org.

Note: Statement endorsed and supported by the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council: Company of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, Congregations of St. Joseph, International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, School Sisters of Notre Dame.

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Please recycle

Statement

Meeting the need for safe water and sanitation as a means to poverty eradication

1. At the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995, Governments promised to give the highest priority in national, regional and international policies and actions to the promotion of social progress, justice and the betterment of the human condition based on full participation by all. To that end, it was decided to create a framework for action to place people at the centre of development and direct economies to meet human needs more effectively.

2. At the 2002 Monterrey Consensus, Governments agreed that mobilizing and increasing the effective use of financial resources and achieving the national and international economic conditions needed to fulfil internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, to eliminate poverty, improve social conditions and raise living standards and protect the environment, will be the first step to ensuring that the twenty-first century becomes the century of development for all.

3. It has been heartening to witness that the General Assembly, in its resolution 64/292, recognized that access to water and sanitation is a human right. Members of civil society applaud the efforts of the Representative from the Plurinational State of Bolivia to bring the resolution to the floor. In its most recent constitution, South Africa also includes the right to water, and several other nations have adopted legislation on the right to water. Other developing nations such as Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria and Uganda are engaged in extending the provision of safe water and sanitation.

4. In Soufouroulaye, Mali, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) arranged funding to repair latrines and a non-functioning water pump at a school, which had left children at a high risk of disease. International partners, including "Dubai cares", the Government of Belgium, the Wavin water distribution group, the "Aqua for all" foundation of the Netherlands and Danone in Japan are working to make a difference in the lives of families in Mali, where some 60 per cent of schools will be given help to obtain clean drinking water and sanitation facilities, as well as health and hygiene education, in order to give children the capacity to be agents of change.

5. In Uganda, progress has been made in improving school attendance, especially for girls. The "Focusing on resources for effective school health" programme, in conjunction with UNICEF, has: (a) installed 172 water tanks, 190 latrines and 45 washrooms; (b) trained 721 teachers in skills-based health education, focusing on how to deal with girls' issues, and equipped teachers with basic counselling skills; and (c) developed a partnership with the World Food Programme to collaborate with rehabilitating schools.

6. The United Nations *2010 Global Annual Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water*, published by the World Health Organization, found that total foreign assistance for water fell between 1997-2008. It also reported that developing nations attach insufficient priority to water and sanitation in their national poverty reduction plans. Additionally, Transparency International cites corruption in the

water sector as a root cause and catalyst for the global water crisis that threatens billions of lives and exacerbates environmental degradation.

7. People who lack access to safe water and sanitation remain excluded from the most elementary opportunities for social integration. The World Health Organization estimates that 884 million people, or one person in eight, live without safe drinking water, a number that is predicted to increase with the effects of climate change. Another 2.5 billion are without sanitation, despite the fact that safe drinking water and hand washing with soap could prevent 85 to 90 per cent of diarrhoeal diseases. It also remains the case that 4,000 children die every day from water-related diseases.

8. The development of water and sanitation systems in rural and urban areas would: (a) alleviate poverty; (b) contribute to overall food security; (c) ensure general health and help to eradicate diarrhoeal diseases; (d) allow the girl child to attend school and women to take on a productive role in education, work and community involvement regarding the protection and management of water and sanitation systems; and (e) help to achieve environmental and economic sustainability.

Recommendations

9. Member States must place greater importance on the need for and benefits to the provision of access to water and sanitation.

10. People, especially those in need and who would benefit most, should be placed at the centre of development by inviting them to be equal partners in decision-making and through every step of the project.

11. Well-established, credible partners should be chosen with which to collaborate in this effort.

12. Sufficient funding should be allocated from domestic resources in order to provide sustainable country-wide water and sanitation infrastructure, management and maintenance.

13. Water and sanitation facilities should be provided in schools so that the girl child will be safer, better educated and prepared for a mature, productive role in society.

14. Clear limits should be specified on the private ownership and control of water and sanitation resources. All public/private partnerships for delivery systems must be monitored to ensure that their structures contain components that work to the favour of the poor.

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Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: poverty eradication

Statement submitted by Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, Franciscans International, Grail, International Council of Jewish Women, International Council of Women, International Federation for Home Economics, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, International Federation of University Women, International Movement ATD Fourth World, International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, NGO Committee on UNICEF, NGO Health Committee, Pan Pacific South-East Asia Women's Association, Passionists International, Plan International-Norway, Salvation Army, Sisters of Charity Federation, Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, UNANIMA International, United Nations Foundation, World Movement of Mothers and World Youth Alliance, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Please recycle

Statement

Critical concerns

1. Gender discrimination contributes to the continuance of poverty. Poverty will not cease until girls and women have the same rights and opportunities in life as boys and men. Research indicates that prevailing social norms and cultural practices have a powerful negative influence on the life opportunities of girls. Key barriers to those opportunities are set out below.

Discriminatory educational practices

2. Education has long-term positive outcomes and is universally accepted as a leading mechanism of poverty eradication and social development. Although there has been an increase in primary school enrolment, many developing nations have not achieved gender parity in primary and secondary education. Gender differences in secondary education remain particularly large, and two thirds of countries have not achieved parity in secondary education. Girls still account for the majority of children who are out of school; are less likely than boys to be enrolled in school; are more likely to drop out; and are less likely to develop vital skills and competencies. Impoverished girls are 3.5 times more likely to be out of school than their wealthier peers.

Child labour

3. As a result of living in poverty, many girls are forced into situations of child labour to ensure their survival. Those at the greatest risk are the poorest, most marginalized children. Child labour perpetuates the cycle of poverty and limits educational opportunities. More than 100 million girls ages 5 to 17 are drawn into child labour around the world, with the majority involved in hazardous work, including domestic service. In many cases, increased risk is associated with higher rates of migration. While both boys and girls engage in exploitative and hazardous work to supplement their family's income, girls are more likely to be hidden, working as domestic servants, or trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation. Child domestic workers as young as five years old often work 12 to 18 hours per day to supplement their family's income. The long hours and working conditions deprive them of their childhood and education, and exclude them from society. Such circumstances place girls at risk of physical, psychological and sexual abuse, which in turn increases their vulnerability to early pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS.

Prevailing social norms that support gender-based violence

4. Ultimately, the eradication of poverty will be achieved only if the systemic and structural causes are addressed. Challenging the cultural, traditional and normative practices that condone physical and sexual violence against girls and young women is essential to eradicate poverty.

5. Girls are disproportionately affected by gender-based violence in the household, at school, in the workplace and in the community, resulting in both physical and psychological harm. Sexual violence is widespread. According to worldwide prevalence figures, one in five girls are sexually abused in childhood and, in some countries, up to three quarters of women have been victimized by a

partner. In a recent study of 35 countries, between 10 and 52 per cent of women were found to have experienced physical violence at some point in their lives, and between 10 and 30 per cent reported sexual violence.[1] Child marriage, which is most prevalent in poor, rural communities, often perpetuates the cycle of poverty. Because of pressure to bear sons, young brides miss out on their education and adolescence. They and their future children are also more likely to experience numerous hardships and illnesses, including malnutrition and physical and sexual abuse.

Conclusions

6. Consistent with the Copenhagen Declaration and Platform of Action, we affirm that girls have the right to access education and training to prepare them for decent work, participation and leadership as adults in society. High rates of unemployment and low rates of decent work expose girls to poverty, perpetuating vulnerability to exploitation, including commercial sexual exploitation, and the worst forms of labour. Sustainable social development requires that girls be educated and trained, empowering them to participate fully and contribute to their community and society.

7. Girls have the right to freedom from exploitation, as it is harmful to their health and their physical, psychological, spiritual, moral and social development. The trafficking of children and girls violates their human rights.

Recommendation

8. Significant steps towards poverty eradication can be achieved by addressing girls' education, ending child labour and discrimination and violence against girls, and collecting disaggregated data.

9. We urge Member States to:

(a) Commit to gender-sensitive education by:

(i) Undertaking a systematic reform of education at all levels with rights-based, gender-sensitive curricula designed to promote equality and the rights of girls;

(ii) Ensuring all girls have access to quality early childhood development programmes, primary school, secondary school and vocational programmes;

(iii) Enhancing the scientific literacy of all girls by increasing access to science, technology, engineering and math education;

(iv) Investing in quality teacher training that includes gender-sensitive methods;

(v) Increasing the number of women teachers and professors, particularly in the areas of science and technology;

(vi) Removing all barriers to education for girls, including school fees, discriminatory attitudes and curricula, and ensuring their safety travelling to and from school and in the classroom;

[1] World Health Organization, *Addressing Violence against Women and Achieving the Millennium Development Goals* (Geneva, 2005).

(vii) Supporting families through social protection interventions for education, including conditional cash transfers, school food programmes, fellowships and grants;

(viii) Developing comprehensive national education strategies that include dependable long-term funding, ensure adequate education infrastructure and prioritize girls' education in all development plans and poverty reduction schemes;

(b) End child labour by:

(i) Condemning trafficking of children, girls and youth for sexual exploitation and involvement in armed conflict as illegitimate forms of work and violations of human rights and human dignity;

(ii) Providing specialized interventions and appropriate services, including psychosocial support, for all girls who have been trafficked and or involved in armed conflict, hazardous labour or sexual exploitation, in order to address their physical, psychological, social and educational needs, including reintegration into their families, schools and communities;

(iii) Developing future citizens and leaders by providing all girls with age-appropriate knowledge and experiences to prepare them adequately for full economic, social and political participation;

(c) End discrimination and violence against girls by:

(i) Developing, implementing, and enforcing national legislation that ends all forms of discrimination and violence against girls and is consistent with international human rights law;

(ii) Funding programmes to combat discrimination based on gender, age, race, ethnicity, social status, religion, disability and migrant or refugee status;

(iii) Launching public campaigns to empower girls and eliminate all discrimination in the public and private spheres and to promote positive attitudes and behaviours that encourage girls' full partnership in all areas of life;

(iv) Promoting gender-sensitive mentoring with appropriate role models, materials and methods, beginning in early childhood, to ensure that girls grow up to be empowered women who can access higher education;

(v) Enlisting boys and men as partners in tackling gender-based violence and developing programmes to promote changes in both attitudes and behaviours and to address ideologies of masculinity favouring violence within cultural norms and practices;

(vi) Creating safe spaces for girls and young women to meet, share experiences, gain new knowledge and skills to overcome gender barriers to participation in the public domain and expand opportunities for social engagement.

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Statement submitted by International Movement ATD Fourth World, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.5/2011/1.

Please recycle

Statement*

Background

1. Less than five years remain for the international community to make good the promises made in the United Nations Millennium Declaration to, "Spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty" (General Assembly resolution 55/2, para. 11). As recognized in the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals in September 2010, although progress has been made in reaching the Goals, success has not been equally distributed neither between nor within countries (see General Assembly resolution 65/1). A greater understanding is needed of how measures to eradicate extreme poverty, and achieve the Goals, can universally benefit people living in poverty, prioritizing those living in the most vulnerable conditions.

Need for a rights-based approach to eradicate extreme poverty founded on the knowledge of people with first-hand experience

2. ATD Fourth World maintains that extreme poverty is both the cause and the consequence of human rights violations.[1] A rights-based approach must therefore be central to efforts to eradicate extreme poverty, and consequently to achieve the Goals by 2015.

3. This is given credence by the General Assembly's reaffirmation that the existence of widespread extreme poverty inhibits the full and effective enjoyment of human rights. The General Assembly also reaffirms that the full and effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing and contribute to the eradication of extreme poverty.

4. Drawing on experience derived from a long-term grass-roots presence and action alongside some of the most disadvantaged families across the world, ATD Fourth World believes that a human-rights-based approach to poverty eradication can only be effective if the experience and thinking of those living in extreme poverty is utilized. Even when rights are guaranteed on paper, their enjoyment remains unfulfilled unless positive measures are taken based on the experience of people living in extreme poverty.

5. Special attention must be given to people living in extreme poverty in order for them to claim their rights. A child's right to primary education is dependent on the fulfilment of a plethora of other rights because they are inherently interdependent and interrelated. A mother living in a marginal community of Guatemala City stated that sometimes they had to choose between paying for school exams, a photocopy or some other school requirements instead of the daily tortillas.

* Issued without formal editing.

[1] This affirmation was pronounced publicly at the inaugural World Day to Overcome Extreme Poverty, marked annually each 17 October since 1987 and recognized by the United Nations in 1992 as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. The International Day's mobilizing call states: "Wherever men and women are condemned to live in extreme poverty, human rights are violated. To come together to ensure that these rights be respected is our solemn duty" (Joseph Wresinski, founder of ATD Fourth World).

6. Children in extreme poverty may not attend primary school for a number of interrelated reasons: malnutrition and general health problems, lack of adequate housing and presentable clothing, school fees, parents' unemployment and the need to work to contribute to the family's income.

7. Respect and protection of human rights is not always sufficient for people living in extreme poverty to claim their rights. Due attention must also be given to discrimination on the basis of social background, which renders efforts to overcome extreme poverty fruitless as it prevents people from claiming their full set of rights and consequently reassuming their responsibilities as family members and citizens in society. A woman from a deprived neighbourhood in Cusco, Peru, stated that sometimes a marginalized person went to sell goods at the market. There were many people who had a lot of money and good positions, but the poor are thrown out and not even allowed to sell anything.

Proposals for ways forward from ATD Fourth World to work towards eradicating extreme poverty

8. There is a clear need to provide evidence-based proposals that illustrate how efforts to eradicate extreme poverty, and achieve the MDGs, can universally benefit people living in poverty, prioritizing those living in the most vulnerable conditions. Such proposals can only be effective if they capitalize on the knowledge accrued by people living in extreme poverty themselves and if they are given the means to actively participate in the elaboration of such proposals.

- **Move towards implementing a rights-based approach to eradicate extreme poverty:** We encourage States to support the draft guiding principles on human rights and extreme poverty (see A/HRC/15/41), which are based on existing human rights standards and provide an action-oriented resource for the eradication of extreme poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. These draft guiding principles are the result of consultations by a range of relevant stakeholders, including those carried out by ATD Fourth World with people living in extreme poverty in France, Peru, Poland, Senegal, Switzerland and Thailand.

- **Conduct impact assessments on the effect of the Millennium Development Goals to date on those most affected by extreme poverty, which put the participation of people experiencing poverty at its core:** Such impact assessments would enable the United Nations system to gauge the measures that have been effective to date in improving the lives of people experiencing the most severe poverty. A participatory approach to the assessments will capitalize on the expertise of people living in extreme poverty in order to better understand the obstacles to achieving the goals, as well the measures required in order to fill the implementation gaps which currently exist. Such assessments will also provide a wealth of evidence to address how to reach the very poorest populations in the context of the 2015 Goals, and beyond. ATD Fourth World plans to undertake such an assessment, beginning in 2011, and to make available to all relevant actors at the United Nations its findings in time for the special event during the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly in 2013.

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Statement submitted by VIVAT International, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Please recycle

Statement*

Poverty and culture

1. The 2010 Human Development Report includes new indices such as a gender inequality index, inequality-adjusted human development index and multidimensional poverty index, including civic and community well-being. Consideration of indices such as these calls attention to cultural factors and highlights what is the social capital in communities.

2. Structural adjustment programmes have operated at the national level. Social and economic reforms have been designed to address issues associated with the labour market, formal and informal institutions and social processes. Such programmes and reforms are important, yet their effectiveness is compromised if cultural factors are not taken into account. By cultural factors we refer to the learned processes of meaning-making that guide people in their shared view of how the world works. Since human action is both limited and enabled by the meaning people give to their actions, these dynamics must be an essential part of our understanding of poverty and the ways to eradicate it.

3. Cultural issues include a heterogeneous array of constraints and opportunities which influence how people make sense of their experience and, for example, how and with whom a person might seek support. Admittedly cultural issues are more difficult to measure than income or gross national income per capita; however, qualitative tools of analysis are available.

4. Social capital is a helpful concept with which to consider the sense of common good in a community. The term "social capital" is best understood here to refer to the level of trust within the community of a specific population. This in turn influences their motivation to actively contribute to the progress of their society. The way people feel a duty to contribute to the community has a marked influence on the possibilities for concerted action. Examining culture through the lens of social capital can help to identify the extent to which people lack the trust in the system needed for them to actively work together to raise themselves from their impoverished state. Thus, low social capital can be viewed as a significant factor contributing to the widely observed cyclical nature of "chronic poverty".

5. Increasing access to political, educational, and social outlets augments the means available to a population that is struggling to break free of chronic poverty. These empower them to develop their full potential as individuals and as members of a society. At the most basic level, as addressed by a number of the Millennium Development Goals, honouring the rights of a community to education, free political systems, and non-discriminatory social structures, leads the population to garner more trust in the system and a stronger sense of duty to work together to build a healthier, more sustainable, and more vibrant community. Cultural factors are relevant here since they help explain how people living in poverty respond to structural conditions and the substantial variation in responses to similar constraints. People's resilience and ability to take advantage of opportunities often are associated with cultural identity and other related issues. For this reason, cultural

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factors must be taken into consideration in efforts to eradicate poverty and consideration of these factors is essential to achieve long-term results.

6. The public discourse on poverty is also influenced by cultural beliefs, attitudes and assumptions of those who make the policy decisions that affect people's living conditions. These may include: beliefs about dependence and welfare, deservingness, empowerment and responsibility.

7. VIVAT International has 30,000 members working in 130 nations. Below are two examples that demonstrate what has been presented above.

8. VIVAT International has active membership within the Jhalod community in Gujarat, India. While Central Gujarat has become a relatively developed area, there are still impoverished local villages and communities that rely solely on farming and other rural projects for income. Their inhabitants are still highly dependent on daily wages for their day-to-day welfare. The working population is predominantly made up of seasonal labourers who can only find work during the farming season. For the rest of the year they have no opportunity for employment. Resignation and low social capital feed into the bleak economic prospects and dire living conditions.

9. In Jhalod, VIVAT International members, have begun a community-based development programme with the people of the impoverished rural communities. The intention is to increase social and economic capital in order to help transform the collective culture of chronic poverty in the region into a culture of hope. Their means of doing this is to empower the population by creating self-help systems and making use of village structures for leadership training and the enhancement of the status of women. Through the formation of eight village developmental societies, 500 men and 1,500 women have become members of self-help groups aimed at educating, training, and empowering the rural population. People have been motivated to benefit from education and health care. School enrolment has risen 40 per cent. Primary school dropout rates have fallen from 40 per cent to 8 per cent. Through the programme rural communities are developing social capital as they gain necessary skills and knowledge to actively participate in political, social, and economic society.

10. The second example comes from a project of the active membership of VIVAT International in the Smokey Mountain area in Tondo, Manila, Philippines. Recently Ben Beltran was named the Philippines "Millennium Development Goals Warrior" for his 30 years of work with the Smokey Mountains Community. Beltran and his associates, with their programme of economic, physical, cultural and spiritual development, have been instrumental in markedly improving the lives of the "poorest of the poor" in Tondo. Plans include an "ecological village" for 20,000 families. The programme contributes to social capital with principles of integrity, solidarity and creativity forming the basis for social empowerment, facilitating opportunities for people to participate in systems of exchange and production so as to uplift their status. An important aspect of the programme is the Mga Anak ni Inang Dalgdig (Children of Mother Earth) — an environmental performing arts group. The way they draw on dances and rituals from indigenous, Christian and Muslim traditions from various parts of the Philippines helps to promote care for creation and intercultural and interreligious respect.

11. The imperative of eradicating chronic poverty in countless communities is urgent. As the above examples demonstrate, VIVAT International believes that to

stimulate positive results in the long-term, cultural factors must be taken into account in any discourse regarding poverty. It sets out the following recommendations to the 49th Session of the Commission for Social Development:

- That cultural factors be included, along with structural and social factors, in the study and analysis of poverty and how to eradicate it.
- That cultural factors be taken seriously in the planning of programmes since they help influence how poor people respond to structural conditions and point to the substantial variation in responses to similar constraints.
- That in confronting poverty policymakers also consider seriously the culture and world view of the people who are poor. It is essential to involve the people who are living in poverty, the major stakeholders, themselves in the planning process, monitoring of policies and evaluation of them.
- That priority be given to educational programmes that help build social capital in impoverished communities in order to break the cycle of poverty.
- That policymakers be aware of the extent to which they themselves and their own cultural beliefs, attitudes and assumptions influence deliberations and decisions.

Note: Statement endorsed by the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the council: Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, Congregations of Saint Joseph, Dominican Leadership Conference, Franciscans International, International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Salesian Missions and Sisters of Mercy.

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Statement submitted by AARP, Global Action on Aging, HelpAge International, International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics, International Federation on Ageing and International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Please recycle

Statement

Strengthening the protection of older people's rights in poverty eradication strategies

Introduction

1. The rights of older women and men are rarely included in development and poverty eradication policies and programmes. As a result such initiatives fail to address poverty in old age or the intergenerational nature of poverty. As populations age and the proportion of older women and men increases, their role and contribution to the eradication of their own and their families' poverty becomes even more important.

Poverty and human rights

2. It is increasingly acknowledged that poverty is both a cause and a consequence of human rights violations and discrimination. Human rights are interdependent and interrelated: the protection of one right has an impact on the enjoyment of others. There is also a growing consensus about the multidimensional nature of poverty, that is that lack of income is not the only thing that makes people poor. Lack of opportunity and participation, limited access to health care, poor nutrition and poor education, deprivation of knowledge and lack of access to information are all interdependent denials of rights that contribute to people's poverty.

Older people's poverty and human rights

3. According to the United Nations Population Division, older people will outnumber children for the first time in history by 2045. The world is ageing at a rate that is unprecedented, without parallel in human history, so the numbers of people facing age discrimination and poverty in old age are likely to increase.

4. Older people are particularly affected by chronic poverty.[1] Without appropriate social protection and other measures to protect older people's rights, a lifetime of poverty is exacerbated in old age. Older women are particularly vulnerable after suffering from a lifetime of gender inequalities including lower pay for equal work and the inability to make contributions to pension schemes or accumulate assets.

5. Older people's poverty is a global issue and not confined to developing countries: on average 13.3 per cent of people over 65 in countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development are poor compared with 10.6 per cent of the general population.[2]

6. Older people's vulnerability to income poverty is closely linked to the denial of their right to social security. It has been estimated that fewer than one in five

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[1] Chronic Poverty Research Centre, *The Chronic Poverty Report 2008-9: Escaping Poverty Traps*, p. 6.

[2] OECD Income Distribution Database, cited in the draft report on the current status of the social situation, well-being, participation in development and rights of older people, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, August 2010.

people over 60 worldwide receive a pension,[3] which suggests that as many as 607 million older people lack income security.

7. For many who do receive a pension, contributory or non-contributory, the level is so low that it does not enable them to enjoy an adequate standard of living and other rights that often require an income, such as access to health care and the rights to housing, food, water and sanitation. A social pensions database compiled by HelpAge International shows that in India, the Republic of Moldova and Thailand, for example, non-contributory pensions represent just 5 per cent of average earnings.

8. Age discrimination in employment also directly impacts on older people's income poverty. Millions of older women and men in low- and middle-income countries are denied their right to decent work, a right which is now widely acknowledged as being essential for sustainable development and poverty eradication.[4] According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 70 per cent of men and nearly 40 per cent of women over 60 in least developed countries continue to work, but many face significant challenges including insecure work, low wages, difficulty accessing capital and credit, unpaid and unrecognized work and exclusion from skills-development programmes.

9. Income insecurity is, however, only one aspect of older people's poverty. Older women and men experience other forms of poverty as a result of age discrimination and denial of their rights.

10. Deprivation of knowledge and lack of access to information are key aspects of poverty. Data from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization show that literacy rates of people over 65 are lower than those of the overall adult population. In some countries less than 25 per cent of the older population is literate, for example in Mozambique where 19 per cent of the older population is literate compared with 48 per cent of the total population. In many countries older women have even lower literacy rates, lower than that of older men and as low as 4 per cent in Nepal. The inability to read and write influences the enjoyment of other rights and makes moving out of poverty more difficult.

11. Poor health is another aspect of poverty. While individual biological and genetic factors play a role, older people's health status is also influenced by the extent to which their rights to social security, adequate housing, food, water, freedom from violence and abuse, education and work are protected. However, older people continue to be overlooked and deprioritized in health policies and programmes. There is limited attention to non-communicable diseases and little basic gerontology and geriatric training of health workers. In addition, ageism and age discrimination occur at all levels: from household decision-making about scarce resources, to ageist attitudes of health professionals towards older people, to the lack of investment in geographically and financially accessible services and medication.

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[3] A. Forteza, I. Lucchetti and M. Pallares-Miralles, "Measuring the coverage gap", in R. Holzmann, D. A. Robalino and N. Takayama, eds., *Closing the Coverage Gap: Role of Social Pensions and Other Retirement Income Transfers*, Washington, World Bank, 2009, pp. 23-40.

[4] HelpAge International, *Forgotten workforce: older people and their right to decent work* (London, 2010), p. 4.

12. Inability to participate in your community and decision-making processes that affect you is another component of poverty. Many older people remain excluded from these processes owing to frailty, being housebound and not having access to appropriate transport to enable them to participate. Lack of identity documentation is another major barrier to participation.

13. This multidimensional nature of poverty and its direct relationship to the enjoyment of human rights demands poverty eradication programmes and policies that are based on human rights and social justice.

Older people's rights in poverty eradication strategies

14. Increased attention is being paid to older people's rights at the Third Committee of the General Assembly, by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women which recently adopted general recommendation No. 27 on older women and protection of their human rights, and by the Human Rights Council. The independent expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty recognized in her 2010 annual report that "non-contributory pensions can significantly reduce poverty and vulnerability among old people, in particular for women, who live longer and are less likely to benefit from contributory systems" (see A/HRC/14/31).

15. Greater attention to protecting the rights of older people in poverty eradication strategies is needed. The impact on poverty of age discrimination and denial of older women's and men's rights needs to be acknowledged and incorporated into poverty eradication strategies.

16. Developing strategies to reduce older people's poverty would not be at the expense of other rights holders. Poverty is intergenerational and rights are interdependent and indivisible. Realizing the rights of one group can often result in the greater enjoyment of rights by another group. For example, realizing older people's right to social security in South Africa resulted in girls who live in households which receive a non-contributory pension being 7 per cent more likely to be enrolled full time in school than girls living in households without a pension.[5]

Recommendations

17. The High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly held in September 2010 refocused attention on how to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The outcome document[6] recognizes the need for comprehensive systems of social security including establishing a minimum level of social security and health care for all (para. 70 (g)) to accelerate progress on the poverty eradication goal. The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, in paragraphs 48 and 49, also recommends appropriate social security measures as key to reducing the proportion of people living in extreme poverty.

18. This can be implemented through the adoption of a set of social protection mechanisms, including social transfers, which together span an individual's lifetime. These mechanisms ensure comprehensive coverage and protection of rights that deal

[5] M. Samson and others, The Social and Economic Impact of South Africa's Social Security System, Economic Policy Research Institute Research Paper No. 37 (Capetown, 2008), p. 73.

[6] General Assembly resolution 65/1.

with both age-related vulnerability (during childhood and old age) and the economic shocks relating to life cycle changes — including unemployment, pregnancy, widowhood, disability and ill-health — which can increase the risk of poverty. This life cycle approach provides consistent and cumulative benefits for individuals, including older people, throughout their lives and supports households for the long term by tackling intergenerational poverty transmission.

19. Specific income poverty eradication strategies have to be complemented by greater protection of older women's and men's rights more broadly. Existing human rights instruments do not provide adequate legal protection of the rights of older people. In practice, too, older women's and men's rights are not being sufficiently addressed or protected through the existing human rights system.

20. There has been increased debate among Member States and civil society around the need for a special rapporteur and a convention on the rights of older people. These new human rights instruments would not only clarify Government responsibilities towards older women and men and improve accountability, but would also provide a framework for policy and decision-making. Application of such a framework to poverty eradication would ensure that strategies take into account the impact of the interdependence of rights on older people's poverty and that of the households and communities in which they live.

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Please recycle

Statement*

1. Several recent reports highlight the inadequacy of reducing poverty to the presence or lack of money. The publication entitled *Rethinking Poverty: Report on the World Social Situation, 2010* challenges all of us, Governments, civil society, business and social planners, to recognize that poverty has multiple causes and many dimensions. An integrated approach to poverty eradication is essential. The root causes of poverty must be named and addressed. People must again be placed at the heart of our planning. Growth based on speculation that fails to create decent jobs is unacceptable. Real jobs for real people in a real economy are called for.

2. To measure poverty solely in financial terms fails to do justice to its complex reality. A person living in poverty cannot be defined solely in terms of how much or how little money he or she possesses.

3. Poverty and social exclusion are not the result of bad luck or personal weakness, but are most often due to political and economic decisions that favour the powerful over the weak. The cumulative impact of the multiple crises of finance, food, energy and climate change have strained the capacity of the most vulnerable members of our societies to work their way out of the poverty trap. This has particular relevance to indigenous peoples who are disproportionately represented among those living in "extreme poverty"; they lack access to social services, basic health care and education. They are thus open to manipulation by businesses seeking to benefit from their resources without sharing those benefits in a fair way.

4. At the opening of the ninth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (see SG/SM/12418-HR/5013) noted the alarming statistics contained in the *Report on the State of the World's Indigenous Peoples*. They constitute 5 per cent of the world's population and one third of the world's poorest people. In many countries an indigenous child can expect to die 20 years earlier than a non-indigenous child. For many of the 370 million indigenous people in more than 70 countries, violence, brutality and discrimination are daily realities.

5. Members of Passionists International, working with indigenous peoples in many countries, report a noticeable increase in acts of discrimination and violence against our indigenous brothers and sisters.

6. Indigenous peoples usually have a connection with the land, measured in thousands of years. These lands are also often rich in biodiversity, natural resources, water and minerals. Though they have lived on and cared for these lands and resources, they seldom prosper from the fruits of these resources.

7. One thing learned from the rush to meet the Millennium Development Goals and implement national development plans, is that the dominant model of development has often created disadvantages for indigenous persons, families and communities.

8. Indigenous people are caught in the tension created by the demands for greater production that come with bilateral free trade agreements and their own right to self-determination. Practices that worsen their situation include:

* Issued without formal editing.

- The taking of large tracts of indigenous land for biofuel production which also threatens biodiversity
- Infringement of their traditional ownership of land
- The granting of mining leases negatively affecting their health, well-being and prosperity

Some members of Passionists International who stand with the people in these struggles receive death threats and have been threatened with imprisonment or expulsion from the country.

9. While policy is best developed at the multilateral level, practical efforts to achieve poverty eradication are best done at local and country levels within an enabling international environment and maximum participation by the people who are living in poverty. Several countries with indigenous populations fail to honour the principles they accepted in adopting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Of particular concern is the failure to respect the principle of free, prior and informed consent.

10. A positive development of the recent Millennium Development Goals Summit is that indigenous peoples are no longer invisible. Their plight and their particular needs are mentioned in five paragraphs (see General Assembly resolution 65/1). States are reminded of their responsibility to ensure respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people.

11. In calling for partnerships to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the Summit called upon the private sector to contribute to poverty eradication by adapting its business models to the needs and possibilities of the poor. The relationship of the private sector to indigenous communities has special relevance in the areas of land ownership, food security and the extractive industries.

12. Regarding Goal 7, the Summit called for stronger political commitment and action at all levels to implement global objectives on sustainable forest management, to reduce the loss of forest cover and improve the livelihoods of those that depend on forests by developing a comprehensive and more effective approach to financing activities. To achieve these goals, local and indigenous communities must be involved. There is also a call to address the threats posed by illicit activities.

13. Such activities affect indigenous people who depend upon the forests for their livelihood and who, in turn, play a custodial role in sustaining the forests. More and more they are subject to illicit activities by both State and non-State actors.

14. The mid-term assessment of the Second Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples shows that very few Member States have officially recognized their indigenous communities. Even fewer have granted constitutional protection to indigenous peoples. Without protection before the law, the human rights of indigenous peoples are endangered, their land and resources claims are denied, and all aspects of their advocacy work are handicapped.

15. The various crises we face offer an opportunity for major rethinking of the dominant model of development. This has been too focused on economic growth to the neglect of human well-being, human rights and environmental sustainability.

16. In the past some development projects, in the name of progress, have displaced indigenous peoples from their lands and harmed their culture and right to self-determination. This must not be allowed to continue.

Recommendations

17. Recommendations include:

- Country poverty reduction strategies must include targets related to indigenous issues. They must ensure the active participation of indigenous peoples who can and should be agents of change themselves.
- In the elaboration of national development plans, States must ensure indigenous representatives, including indigenous women, are consulted so that their needs are not compromised by such planning.
- To better monitor progress in meeting the Millennium Development Goals and to create better policies and programmes, States must strengthen their national statistical systems to ensure that data collected is reliable and disaggregated. This will help to recognize and respond to the needs of distinct groups, including indigenous peoples.
- International frameworks, such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (see General Assembly resolution 61/295), must be made operational at the local level through policies and programmes to redress social and economic injustices. This has particular relevance to the presence and activity of corporations on indigenous lands.
- Creating decent work opportunities as an effective tool to assist those living in poverty is urgent. In planning development to meet the Millennium Development Goals, States should actively seek ways to incorporate indigenous skills into agricultural, forest and rural programmes.

Note: Statement also endorsed by the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council: Company of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, Congregations of Saint Joseph, Dominican Leadership Conference, International Presentation Association of the Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Loretto Community, Salesian Missions, Sisters of Charity Federation, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and UNANIMA International.

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Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: poverty eradication

Statement submitted by the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Please recycle

Statement

1. The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies exists to advocate for the human rights of criminalized women. Imprisonment of women is increasing at an alarming rate worldwide.

2. Internationally, the inextricable link between criminalization of women and poverty has been widely recognized. Most women prisoners are poor. Most are criminalized due to previous failures by Member States to meet their human rights obligations. The vast majority of women are imprisoned for minor, non-violent offences due to poverty. Women's vulnerability to committing poverty-driven crime is exacerbated by the continuing failure of Member States to eradicate poverty.

In Canada

3. In 2007, 2.9 million Canadians were living in poverty. Seventy per cent of people living in absolute poverty were women and girls. In 2005, social assistance rates for single-parent families in various provinces were 27-52 per cent below the poverty line; for single employable people, rates were 54-84 per cent below the poverty line. Women and youth account for 83 per cent of Canadian minimum wage earners, many of whom live in poverty.

4. Canada ranks near the bottom of 12 industrialized countries in terms of poverty reduction. Since 1995, there have been major cuts in social, medical and educational funding. Eighty per cent of applicants for community-based services designed to address poverty are being turned away. Evidence-based services are frequently replaced by knee-jerk responses in areas such as crime prevention, homelessness and restorative justice: programmes which presume criminality and perpetuate the problems of the poor. The United Nations has denounced these policy changes, which have increased the percentage of women living in poverty, and recognized that they contribute to the persistence of poverty among socially marginalized women.

5. Most criminalized women in Canada have a history of low levels of education, limited employment and poor housing conditions. Women are too often criminalized for activities driven by economic survival: 80 per cent of women prisoners are serving sentences for economic-related crimes, most involving fraud or theft of amounts under $5,000.

In Australia

6. The pattern is very similar in Australia. By the standard Australian measure, in 2006 2.2 million people (11.1 per cent of Australians) lived in poverty compared with 9.9 per cent in 2004 and 7.6 per cent in 1994. (Using the European measure, the number living in poverty in 2006 would nearly double to 3.8 million, or 19.4 per cent.) Approximately 70 per cent of people living in poverty are jobless. In 2005, Australia spent much less (3.2 per cent) than the average for the countries of the Organization for Cooperation and Development (6.5 per cent) on income support as a proportion of gross domestic product. Between 2003 and 2005/6, the number of households living in poverty while at least one member was in paid employment increased by 9.4 per cent. Australian women also have lower levels of workforce participation, are more likely to be engaged in low paid, casual and part-time work and are paid less than men for jobs requiring similar skills.

7. Australia, too, has seen significant cuts to services designed to alleviate or address poverty, in lieu of short-term, symptom-focused programmes.

8. Women commit fewer and less serious crimes than men and most incarcerated women are imprisoned for minor offences. In 2006, the average period served by women prisoners in Queensland was about two months. (This is in marked contrast with a mean aggregate sentence length for all Australian prisoners of approximately three years.) A staggering 60 per cent of imprisoned women in Australia (compared with 2 per cent of men) are first-time offenders. Despite no increase in crime, the number of women prisoners in Australia rose by 72 per cent between 1998 and 2008.

In both Canada and Australia

9. Criminalization is closely associated with family violence: the vast majority of women prisoners have a past history of abuse. Women are increasingly trapped in abusive relationships because they have no alternative in the absence of emergency accommodation and affordable housing; they earn lower wages than men, and waiting lists for subsidized childcare impede women from participating in employment or education.

10. Criminalized women are highly disproportionately members of social minorities including indigenous women, women with disabilities and young women. Multigenerational poverty is perpetuated through the criminalization of mothers.

11. Both Canada and Australia have a history of colonialization which has led to extreme poverty among their First Peoples. They were two of the only four Member States to vote against the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007. This underscores the depth of oppression of Aboriginal peoples of these countries. The ongoing impacts of colonialism, including economic poverty, cultural destruction, dispossession, criminalization and other forms of social marginalization, are beyond dispute.

12. In Canada in 2001, more than 36 per cent of Aboriginal women were living in poverty, compared to 17 per cent of non-Aboriginal women. Aboriginal young people were seven times more likely to be incarcerated than non-Aboriginal youth in 2005/6. In at least one region, the majority of women prisoners are Aboriginal. There are more indigenous youth in the child welfare care system today than when the residential schools were in place. Children living "on reserve" are identified as having significantly higher child welfare needs, yet they receive less funding than the other children. Only 3 out of 10 First Nations children living on reserves graduate from high school, due to lack of funding from the federal Government; 53 First Nations communities do not have schools and many off-reserve schools require expansion or repair. In 2008, the federal budget allocated only 23 per cent of the funding needed for Aboriginal child welfare. While a further $20 million were to be added to this funding in 2009, the budget still only covers a third of the required funds.

13. In Australia in 2006, the median income of indigenous households was 65 per cent that of non-indigenous households. In 2004 indigenous women were imprisoned at 21 times the rate of non-indigenous women; in 2008 indigenous young people were 28 times more likely to be imprisoned than non-indigenous youth. In Queensland, Australia, compared with non-indigenous women, indigenous

women are disproportionately imprisoned on remand, sentenced to prison, classified as high-security prisoners, placed in administrative segregation and serve their full sentence. Indigenous women prisoners are less likely to be functionally literate in English and typically have a lower level of education and employment.

14. It is clear that in both States, prisons function as the most comprehensive homelessness initiative for indigenous peoples. This is in direct contravention of their right to improvement in all aspects of their economic and social conditions, protection of women and children from all forms of violence and discrimination, and special measures to counteract the damage of past wrongs.

15. Similar data are available on poverty as a key driver of criminalization among women with disabilities and young women. A complex interrelationship between poverty, homelessness, mental health issues, substance abuse and racial discrimination is clearly evident in both countries.

16. Most women prisoners are mothers of dependent children, and were the primary family income earner prior to imprisonment. Single-parent households headed by women are among the most impoverished families in Canada and Australia. The failure of the Governments to respect women's rights also breaches the rights of their children.

17. In Australia, the children of prisoners have been found to be five times more likely to be ultimately imprisoned. A Canadian study found that young people whose parents are marginalized, have mental health issues and/or are criminalized have a 62 per cent likelihood of being criminalized. Criminalization of mothers perpetuates poverty and condemns their children to a significantly increased risk of criminalization in later life.

Solutions

18. In the current global economic climate, the eradication of poverty is unlikely to occur without some redirection of funds. The Justice Reinvestment model advocated by the Australian Human Rights Commission and leading thinkers in the United States of America and the United Kingdom offers a means of addressing poverty and reducing criminalization.

19. Imprisoning women costs developed nations many billions of dollars annually. In Australia, in 2007-2008, $2.6 billion were spent on adult corrective services; the United States of America spends over $60 billion annually on prisons alone. Redirection of funds from prisons to poverty eradication is an immediate investment in meeting international human rights obligations and a long-term investment in reducing multigenerational poverty and crime.

20. It is essential that Member States work alongside affected communities, particularly indigenous communities, to develop national anti-poverty strategies with a long-term vision, measurable targets, clear timelines, articulated accountability measures and commensurate funding. National strategies should:

(a) Provide adequate and accessible income supports;

(b) Address immediate poverty-related needs, including culturally appropriate, community-based rental emergency housing, child welfare, and mental health and substance abuse support programmes;

(c) Provide affordable, appropriately located, publicly funded housing;

(d) Provide universal, publicly funded childcare;

(e) Improve the salaries and working conditions of low-wage workers, including by ensuring wage parity between men and women;

(f) Provide accessible, quality education and training for all.

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Statement submitted by American Cancer Society, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Statement*

1. The American Cancer Society is a leader in the global cancer control movement, addressing the growing global cancer and tobacco burden through a variety of programmes and initiatives throughout the world, including Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. The mission of the American Cancer Society is to eliminate cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives and diminishing suffering from cancer. The American Cancer Society is a non-governmental organization partner of the Non-Communicable Disease Alliance, the group formed by the International Federations (Union for International Cancer Control, International Diabetes Federation, World Heart Federation, International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease) representing the four main diseases outlined in the World Health Organization 2008-2013 Non-communicable Diseases Action Plan of the Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases.

2. The American Cancer Society,

Acknowledging that:

- Health, poverty eradication and social development are accorded a key role in the Millennium Development Goals and other international policies.
- The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (2002):
  - Includes among its central themes the provision of health care, support and social protection for older persons, including preventive and rehabilitative health care;
  - Identifies advancing health and well-being into old age as one of three priority directions in its recommendations for action, affirming that:
    - For both humanitarian and economic reasons, it is necessary to provide older persons with the same access to preventive and curative care and rehabilitation as other groups.
    - An epidemiological transition is now under way in all regions of the world, indicating a shift in predominance of infectious and parasitic diseases to one of chronic and degenerative diseases. Many developing countries and countries with economies in transition are, however, confronting a double burden of fighting emerging and re-emerging communicable diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, in parallel with the increasing threat of non-communicable diseases.
- Its specific actions include:
  - Focusing on the major known risks arising from unhealthy diets, physical inactivity and other unhealthy behaviours, such as smoking and alcohol abuse, in health promotion, health education, prevention policies and information campaigns.
  - Taking comprehensive action to prevent the abuse of alcohol, to reduce the use of tobacco products and involuntary exposure to tobacco smoke in promoting the cessation of tobacco use at all ages.

* Issued without formal editing.

Considering that:

- Improved health care is a key pillar of global actions to combat poverty and promote social development.
- Death and disability from non-communicable diseases (cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and chronic respiratory disease) significantly hinder economic development and are a major threat to the global economy. Non-communicable diseases are not only a major cause of mortality but also a major cause of poverty and a barrier to economic development.
- Non-communicable diseases are responsible for 60 per cent of the world's deaths. Annually 8.1 million premature deaths from non-communicable diseases occur in low- and middle-income countries.
- Globally, non-communicable diseases deaths are projected to increase by 17 per cent in the next 10 years, and by 27 per cent in the African region.
- The inequitable burden on low- and middle-income countries will only be exacerbated in the future: projected non-communicable diseases burden growth will disproportionately affect poor and disadvantaged populations, thereby contributing to widening poverty gaps between and within countries.
- Cancer is a major burden on the world's poor and disproportionately affects the most vulnerable nations and populations. More than 50 per cent of cancer cases and over 70 per cent of all global cancer deaths occurring in low- and middle-income countries, where it claims over 5.3 million lives each year.
- In low- and middle-income countries, cancer is a significant contributor to the overall disease burden in adults. In low-income nations, the adult cancer burden is higher than other major public health concerns like malaria, tropical-cluster diseases, nutritional deficiencies, and diabetes. In middle-income nations the adult cancer burden is higher than that attributed to other major public health concerns, including HIV/AIDS, respiratory diseases, diarrhoeal diseases, tuberculosis, maternal conditions, and diabetes.
- The World Economic Forum (*Global Risks 2010: A Global Risk Network Report*) highlighted chronic diseases as one of the three greatest risks to the global economy — alongside fiscal crises and asset price collapse — based on a combination of likelihood and severity.
- Non-communicable diseases can have a devastating economic impact on families — through diminishing household income, out-of-pocket health-care expenses, impacting un-monetized labour, placing a hefty financial burden for care and indirect costs — with long-lasting effects on social networks and communities.
- Avoidable cancer-related morbidity and mortality exacts a considerable economic toll through impacting economic productivity and through the inefficient allocation of scarce health-care resources. According to a recent study on the global economic cost of cancer by the American Cancer Society and LIVESTRONG, cancer is the disease with the largest global financial impact. The study indicates that the financial impact of death and disability caused by cancer in 2008 — not including direct treatment costs — was $895 billion, the equivalent of 1.5 per cent of the global gross domestic product.

- Despite the epidemiological and economic significance of the cancer and the burden of other non-communicable diseases in the developing world and the existence of strategies to reduce incidence, morbidity, and mortality, there are major inequalities between and within nations in access to cancer control resources.

- At the heart of these grave inequalities is a lack of global political and financial commitment to cancer and non-communicable diseases. National and international funding to improve outcomes in low- and middle-income countries is negligible and fails to reflect the magnitude of the disease burden.

  - Despite being responsible for 60 per cent of the world's deaths, the proportion of overall global development assistance for health invested in non-communicable diseases is less than 3 per cent.

  - Only an estimated 5 per cent of global resources for cancer control are spent in low- and middle-income countries, which is completely out of line with the fact that low- and middle-income countries account for more than 50 per cent of cancer cases, over 70 per cent of cancer deaths, and 80 per cent of the disability-adjusted life-years lost to cancer.

  - The African region, for example, accounts for 0.2 per cent of global cancer medical costs, a little over 1 per cent of global spending on health, 6.4 per cent of new cancer cases, and 15 per cent of the global population.

- The global cancer burden is enmeshed within the cycle of poor health and poverty and represents an important impediment to diminishing poverty and ensuring sustainable economic development. Policies and financial support for the development and implementation of evidence-based, resource-appropriate cancer control strategies can reduce the significant social and economic impacts of the disease and play a crucial role in promoting the development of more efficient and sustainable health systems.

- The United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 64/265, calls for a high-level meeting on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (September 2011), offering an unparalleled opportunity to address these diseases and reduce their impact on the poor and ageing populations.

Calls for:

- The Commission for Social Development, Member States, and non-governmental organizations to incorporate and embrace non-communicable diseases control in the recommendations to eradicate poverty.

- Governments to prioritize addressing the non-communicable diseases burden in their national development and health programmes and ensure that the necessary political and financial commitments are made and sustained.

- Governments to recognize the unique social, economic, and health needs of ageing populations and implement the recommendations of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing regarding development and health.

- Governments to invest in health care that addresses the non-communicable diseases burden, encompassing the complete continuum of care, ranging from health promotion and disease prevention to the provision of primary health

care, acute care treatment, rehabilitation, community care for chronic health problems, and palliative care.

- Member States to ensure that their Heads of State or Government attend the General Assembly high-level meeting on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (September 2011), and ensure that the meeting integrates the needs of the poor and ageing populations.

- Member States to ensure the high-level meeting covers the full spectrum of issues raised by non-communicable diseases, including prevention, early detection, access to essential medicines and technologies, treatment and care and the health systems to deliver this in an equitable manner.

- The high-level meeting to offer all parties the opportunity to change the way these diseases, and their associated risk factors, are viewed and addressed around the world. We believe that at a minimum, the high-level meeting should conclude that:

  - Governments should be accountable and measured on non-communicable diseases plans.

  - The World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control should be fully implemented by all countries.

  - Member States should commit to prevent the preventable.

  - Increased resources are needed to deliver global non-communicable diseases interventions.

  - Non-communicable diseases need to be in the Millennium Development Goals successor goals.

  - A set of globally agreed approaches to non-communicable disease treatment and care is needed.